DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 132 071 SO 009 593

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TITLE The Development of a Sequential Curriculum in Anthropology, Grades 1-7.
PUB DATE Dec 75
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the American Anthropology Association (San Francisco, California, December 3, 1975); For a related document, see ED 054 037; Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Analytical Criticism; *Anthropology; *Curriculum Development; *Curriculum Evaluation; *Educational Improvement; Educational Problems; Elementary Secondary Education; Financial Support; Instructional Materials; Program Descriptions; Projects; Reports; Sequential Approach; Social Studies; Success Factors; Teacher Developed Materials; Units of Study (Subject Fields)
IDENTIFIERS *Anthropology Curriculum Project

ABSTRACT

The University of Georgia's Anthropology Curriculum Project (ACP) is viewed in retrospect and certain developments of the project are appraised in light of current school problems. Three questions were asked in an evaluation of the project: (1) can elementary children learn anthropology as a single discipline? (Answer, yes); (2) is there a relationship between teacher knowledge of anthropology and pupil achievement in anthropology? (Answer, no); and (3) will the inclusion of anthropology in the elementary curriculum reduce ethnocentrism? (Answer, probably). Results of the formal evaluation and a less formal observation of factors affecting classroom learning of anthropology are discussed and three recommendations for updating the project materials are offered. First, replace the packaged primary materials with "scratch units" which would stimulate teacher initiative. Second, materials would be consolidated into one semester-long elementary course and one semester-long middle grade course rather than be units in anthropology by grade level. Emphasis would be on in-depth instruction at a given time rather than on yearly sequences. Third, there should be some reduction in the conceptual load children are expected to master. The author concludes that the modestly financed ACP has been successful relative to better-funded NSF projects in the social and natural sciences and in mathematics. Continued evaluation and materials development is recommended. (DB)

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ED132071

DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF ANTHROPOLOGY MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

"The Development of a Sequential Curriculum in Anthropology, Grades 1-7"

by

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A paper prepared for the meeting of the American Anthropology
San Francisco, Wednesday, December 3, 1975

The curriculum perspective of the early 1960s differs from that of the 1970s. Then the National Science Foundation funded such single discipline, college based high school social science projects as the Anthropology Curriculum Study Project and the High School Geography Project. The discipline orientation has not disappeared--witness the code system of the NSF brochure Educational Program Restructuring--but it competes now with a unified science approach. Then the emphasis, still in the shadow cast by Sputnik--was an increase in cognitive competency--the methods of inquiry and knowledge generated by a discipline. Now a host of other considerations, from the process of values to the problems of the disadvantaged learner and self-concepts of minority learners--intrude upon the process of curriculum conceptualization and teaching. The purpose of this paper is to take a retrospective view of the Anthropology Curriculum Project, and to appraise certain decisions in the light of current school problems. Such a process is inevitably biased in this paper, because the appraiser and the developer are the same. Nevertheless, this presentation may set the basis for some thought about the process of development and evaluation.

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The Project described is the University of Georgia "Development of a Sequential Curriculum in Anthropology, Grades 1-7," USOE funded 1964-1969, and continued since that time with limited University funding in the form of assistantships for graduate students. In the early years, the emphasis was on the development of a product that could be used in the schools, although there was a strong evaluation component. Since 1970, the emphasis has shifted to the conceptualization of curriculum models and the training of doctoral students in curriculum research. In addition, the Project cooperates in a number of other activities, such as the distribution of materials relating to the teaching of anthropology and the program in Anthropology and Education, as a means of helping maintain an interest in all phases of anthropology as it relates to education.

Curriculum Premise. The curriculum model employed was that of a subject matter curriculum, subsequently elaborated as the "Disciplines-Language Approach to the Social Studies" (Rice, 1973). Briefly, a subject matter organization provides a logical structure for the transmission of knowledge, and that learning itself is facilitated by such an organization. Thus one of the distinctive aspects of the Georgia Anthropology Project materials, in contrast to such multidisciplinary approaches as Edith West's Minnesota Social Studies Project or Senesch's "organic curriculum" using economics as a core, was the adherence to an anthropological framework, both

in terms of the concepts and generalizations to-be-learned but also in the activities associated with the curruculum. For example, the student and teacher manuals suggested activities other than using the text, such as participant observation in connection with "show and tell" in the first grade. Here the activity was introduced, not as an end, but to develop an early understanding of the relationship of a data gathering methodology to the process of making inferences.

The question today is"How viable is a single discipline approach in the elementary grades?" Project evaluation showed that pupils could learn, and teachers are able to teach, the concepts and generalizations associated with the subject of anthropology. The Project has never claimed that this evidence, per se, demonstrated that a discipline approach was superior to a multi-discipline approach, an issue which is essentially a policy question than a research question. The Project has produced evidence that single discipline approaches are suitable for young learners, and thus served to negate the proposition, widely assumed, that young pupils can not learn within a discipline framework.

From our standpoint, a discipline approach to school instruction serves the valuable purpose of keeping channels of communication between the parent social science and the school adaptation open. When a social studies frame is ued, it is usually made-up and contrived by a team put together by a publishing house, which is more interested in gimmicks which contribute to marketability rather than to sustained intellectual development.

In this respect, it is important to emphasize that none of the social science disciplines have a narrow, fragmentary nature in which they are usually depicted by their detractors. Many disciplines, such as anthropology and geography, are electic disciplines by nature, covering a wide range of phenomena. While such discipline has a distinctive core, it is in the nature of social science disciplines to spread out and overlap. Thus, it is inevitable that if one examines the various developments in anthropology he comes into contact with elements which are claimed by other disciplines. Population anthropology is a good example of a field shared with sociology, geography, and demography. A curriculum developer in most social sciences today will find that, if pursued in depth, any of the social sciences will inevitably intrude on domains which by tradition have been identified with another subject.

Thus, as anthropology expands from its central core, it embraces new material and new ideas. This process is well exemplified in the two units dealing with cultural change, and idea which is not the peculiar property of anthropology. In the unit Cultural Change: Case Studies of Modernization a deliberate attempt was made to use as case studies the examples of change in urban, industrial, and nationalistic societies in contrast to rural, agricultural, and tribal micro cultures. Is the unit multi-disciplinary social studies, geography, economics, or anthropology? It is anthropological in the sense that its organizing explanation of the change process--invention, discovery, diffusion, and acculturation--are taken from the systematic literature of anthropology. But the content has a tremendous diversity. The same is also true of the comparative unit "Cultural Change in Mexico and the United States," which utilized a socio-historic frame of comparison to describe the process of cultural change in these two countries, one with a

Hispanic and the other a predominantly Anglo heritage. Such units involve children in a wide context of learning, with a cultural point of view based on anthropological constructs.

Evaluation. The formal evaluation of the Project was restricted to two questions: Can elementary children learn anthropology as a single discipline? Is there a relationship between teacher knowledge of anthropology and pupil achievement in anthropology? The first question, we have noted, was related to the need for evidence concerning the prevailing assumption that social studies is more appropriate for young learners than is a single discipline approach to teaching and learning. The second question was important because few elementary teachers had training in anthropology, and, because of the nature of the elementary social studies training, it was thought that few teachers in the future would have training in anthropology. If use of the Project constructed materials depended upon teacher knowledge of anthropology, then it would be unlikely that the materials could be used by general elementary teachers.

Evaluation showed that pupils could learn from a single discipline and that knowledge of anthropology, as measured by (a) number of courses in anthropology or (b) grades received in anthropology made a difference in pupil performance, as measured by unit achievement tests. In brief, pupils taught by teachers who had no training in anthropology performed just as well as pupils taught by teachers who had attended the six week institutes in anthropology conducted by the Project. Now we do not interpret this evidence that training in anthropology does not permit a teacher to teach with a greater depth of understanding or empathy. We simply interpret these results in the context of the numerous variables that influence pupil learning, and teacher knowledge of subject matter is merely one factor. The materials developed by the Project, which typically included teacher essay and background materials, pupil text, teacher guide, and pupil workbook, provided all teachers--trained and untrained--with the minimum base to teach anthropology to elementary pupils. More important to success in learning anthropology were the entering verbal skills of the pupils, as measured by reading and social studies tests, and the general competency of the teachers. Able teachers without any special training in anthropology taught the materials more skillfully than inept teachers who had knowledge of anthropology.

The restricted formal evaluation did not preclude informal, observation of factors affecting classroom learning of anthropology. And the annual teacher feedback conferences were useful in helping to appraise teacher reactions to the material, important for guiding new developments. The lack of additional formal evaluation resulted from a decision not to make either the teachers or the schools a formal object of study. It was thought that to try to get extensive personal data on teachers and the school setting would be threatening to the teachers and the cooperating schools. While useful, it was not essential to the major thrust of the project.

In retrospect, however, the Project missed an excellent opportunity to formally appraise the process of curriculum innovation in the school. Funds should have been found, in some way, to study in one or two schools at least, the perspective of the teachers and pupils the process of becoming involved in a new type of curriculum. Although we had more anthropology majors associated with the Project in the early days than we had education

majors, it would have appeared that we had the necessary manpower. We had the bodies--but not the interest. To our anthropology majors, the idea of using education as a subject of anthropological study seemed alien to the world of anthropology. Perhaps in the 70s, when anthropologists are looking for jobs and being involved in school evaluation of various types, this type of evaluation would be more feasible.

Two other types of evaluation have been added in the latter days of the Project, none of which have been particularly anthropological. One thrust has been the use of anthropological materials to test teaching paradigms, such as the Gaines study of mastery learning using the unit Concept of Culture. Another variation has been the structuring of anthropological material in accordance with some aspect of learning theory. The best example of the use of learning theory has been the use of Ausubel's concept of advance organizers and reception learning to write the cultural change units, developed by Barnes and Clawson. The testing of the anthropological material, in such research patterns, not only tests the utility of the material for classroom use but the utility of a particular learning model for the writing of curriculum materials.

A final thrust in evaluation has been the evaluation of the effect of anthropological materials on the reduction of ethnocentric attitudes. The evidence from three different studies, one by Kleg, one by Troutman, and one by Frech, indicate that the subject matter of anthropology, even when taught in a cognitive frame of reference, can reduce ethnocentrism, as measured by paper and pencil tests. Materials involved in such evaluation have included such general units as Concept of Culture as well as units in applied anthropology, such as Race, Caste, and Prejudice. This is an exciting area of research, largely neglected by anthropologists, which provides an empirical justification for the inclusion of anthropology in the school curriculum. Since Dr. Kleg will speak to this point in his paper, I will not elaborate further.

Evaluation is an important component of curriculum development and implementation. If evaluation is to be serious evaluation, and not just a token, my advice is as follows: For each dollar of development and implementation, provide a dollar for evaluation. Even achievement evaluation is relatively expensive. Thorough evaluation, especially non-quantitative evaluation using ethnographic techniques, is costly. In the long run, we believe the Georgia Project has one of the best evaluation records of any of the 1960 Projects, but we are quick to admit that it was imperfect and a much more thorough type of evaluation could be designed for any future Project development in anthropology.

Implementation and Diffusion. The interest in anthropology as a Project peaked in the late 60s. Since then, the Project has been able to maintain some visibility, but without the enthusiasm of the early years. In contrast to Man: A Course of Study, which enjoyed NSF funding for dissemination until last year, the Georgia materials never did have any dissemination funding. And, unlike the high school materials of the Anthropology Curriculum Study Project, the official project of the American Anthropological Association, the materials were not picked up by a commercial developer who could put them into a more attractive form for the hard-bound, color conscious, American text book market.

If we had the resources to update and revise the materials, we would make the following changes which would add to their utility for school use.

1. We would drop primary materials. There is too little social studies taught in the American schools to justify investment of resources in development for this level. In place we would recommend the development of "scratch units" which would serve as rough models to stimulate teachers, and we would leave it to teacher initiative to try to introduce anthropological concepts in the lower levels. While there are pupil materials developed by the Project for kindergarten and first grade use, these units are still essentially teacher-made units, in the sense that the utilization of the materials does not depend on pupil reading but teacher execution.

2. We would consolidate the materials into one elementary course of a semester duration, and one middle grade course of a semester duration. The logic of a unit in anthropology by grade level was predicated on a discipline model, in which other discipline units could be used also at each grade level. However, the practicalities of American course organization appears to require less emphasis on yearly sequences, and more emphasis on in-depth instruction at a given time. It therefore appears that material which would fit a particular unit of time, either a quarter or semester, might be more attractive.

3. There should be some reduction in the conceptual load. The first unit Concept of Culture erred too far in emphasizing the technical vocabulary of anthropology, so that the rate of introduction of new concepts is too rapid for many elementary learners. Part of the difficulty does not lie so much with the concepts, but the paucity of material, in terms of examples and discussion, to more fully develop the concepts. In the 1960s, there was considerable confusion in the educational literature over concepts and generalizations, so that concepts as specific terms were regarded as mere labeling. The literature on concepts recognizes that knowledge of a word and its meaning facilitates rather than hinders concept development. While there should be some adjustment in the concept load, even more important is to get teachers to understand the importance of systematic vocabulary development to human learning in its symbolic dimensions. In revising material, however, it would be important to keep costs low. Many curriculum materials, notwithstanding their excellence, do not have acceptability because of their high cost. Match-Box and the MACOS materials both suffered from this deficiency. At various times, the Project explored the possibility of developing other related materials rather than print materials--in fact, one Project film "Archeological Methods" has been commercially rather successful. But the limited level of funding which we enjoyed did not permit, at that time, the development of some materials which would have added to their general attractiveness. This factor of initial eye-appeal, in terms of colored pictures, has become a deterrent to innovation in the area of the social sciences in the public schools.

Shift in Project Focus. Federal funding terminated in 1969, but it was decided to continue the Project on a limited basis, with assistance from the University of Georgia in the form of assistantships for graduate students. A few thousand dollars accumulated from the sale of materials provided a rotating fund for the continued duplication of new materials.

It was decided to continue the Project for several reasons. The first reason was utilitarian. The Project had helped the University Department of Social Science Education to gain a certain identity. It seemed useful to try to continue that identity. Second, there were new ideas and new developments in anthropology and in education, which had not yet been tapped. It seemed useful to try to keep some form of organizational arrangement which might facilitate future developments. The Project has been handicapped in recent years for the lack of students interested in anthropology and education. However, the formal establishment of a degree option in Anthropology and Education, both within Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs, may help to alleviate the shortage of manpower, essential to the life of a Project which depends on graduate students. While the Anthropology Curriculum Project will continue to work with curriculum materials--it is now currently considering the possibility of extending some anthropology materials to encompass Spanish bi-lingual education through parallel texts--the emphasis has focused to research in anthropology and education. Formerly we thought of our most important product as being the curriculum material. Now our most important product is the doctoral student who receives training through the Project and the research reports which they develop.

Conclusion. Measured against the massively financed NSF projects in the social and natural sciences and in mathematics, the modestly financed Georgia Anthropology Curriculum Project has been relatively successful. It not only developed a set of materials which could be used at many different grade levels, but it has served as a model for another discipline project--the Georgia Geograpny Curriculum Project, a small project but one which enjoys national attention. Furthermore, the Project did help to make anthropology a meaningful part of social studies instruction. While anthropology may not enjoy a great vogue as a separate discipline, no social studies program is complete without some consideration of anthropological ideas and how they relate to the nature of man and society.

Compared to the organization which the American Psychological Association now has for the emphasis on psychology as a school subject, the American Anthropology Association is relatively disorganized. If anthropology is to maintain its effectiveness in the schools, anthropologists and educators working together will have to continue to develop new materials of instruction and make them available. The Georgia Anthropology Project is ready to participate in future collaborative efforts.

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